United Nations ST/IC/2010/32

Secretariat

25 October 2010

Information circular*

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: **2011 competitive examination for English-language interpreters**

1. The purpose of the present information circular is to invite applications from staff members of the Secretariat at the P-3 level and below who wish to take the 2011 competitive examination for English-language interpreters, in accordance with the provisions of administrative instructions ST/AI/1998/7 and ST/AI/2000/1, as amended by administrative instruction ST/AI/2003/1.

2. A competitive examination for English-language interpreters is tentatively scheduled to be held on **12 and 13 January 2011** in New York, Geneva and other locations, according to the number and location of qualified applicants invited to take the examination and the availability of the necessary technical equipment. The purpose of the examination is to establish a roster from which present and future vacancies for English-language interpreters will be filled. When vacancies occur, successful applicants will be recruited from the roster, subject to the requirements of the service in terms of subject-matter expertise and language combinations.

3. The examination is open to staff members of the United Nations at the P-3 level and below who meet the eligibility requirements, and to qualified external applicants. For the purpose of this examination, staff members from subsidiary organs of the United Nations or separately administered funds or programmes and staff members whose service is limited to a particular mission or office of the United Nations are considered external applicants. Such applicants, if successful in the examination, will be informed of their inclusion in the roster and offered a new appointment with the United Nations subject to normal United Nations recruitment procedures and standards, when selected to fill vacancies for English-language interpreter posts as they occur in New York, Geneva, Vienna or Nairobi.

4. Assignments are subject to rotation (mobility) and successful candidates may thereafter be called upon to serve at other duty stations, according to the needs of the Organization. Successful candidates are expected to serve **a minimum of five years** in language posts. The assignment of staff members of the United Nations

* Expiration date of the present information circular: 31 December 2011.

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who are successful in the examination and are selected to fill vacancies will be subject to the conditions set out in paragraphs 12 to 15 below.

5. Staff members of the Secretariat applying for the examination must:

(a) Have English as their main language;[1]

(b) Have a perfect command of English and an excellent knowledge of French and either Russian or Spanish. The Board of Examiners, appointed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, requires that applicants' claims to knowledge of official languages be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files. Staff members who have been enrolled in a United Nations language course in any of the languages claimed must have passed the United Nations language proficiency examination in that language. Applicants who have not attended United Nations language courses in the languages claimed must substantiate their claims to knowledge of those languages. For that purpose, staff members should give a clear explanation on the P.11 or Personal History Profile (PHP) form of how they acquired their claimed knowledge of the languages;

(c) Hold at least a three-year first level university degree from a recognized school of interpretation in which at least one full academic year is devoted to interpretation. Alternatively, applicants must hold a three-year degree or an equivalent qualification from a university or institution of equivalent status at which English is the language of instruction, and have 200 days of experience as conference interpreters or 200 days of work experience in the fields of translation, editing, verbatim reporting or other related fields. The Board of Examiners may, at its discretion, admit an applicant graduating from a university whose principal language of instruction is other than English provided he/she has adequate secondary educational qualifications from an establishment at which the principal language is English.

6. The requirement for a university degree or its equivalent from a university or institution of equivalent status, mentioned in paragraph 5 (c), may be waived for staff members who, in the judgement of the Board of Examiners, have adequate post-secondary educational qualifications from a university or institution of equivalent status and adequate secondary educational qualifications from an establishment at which the principal language of instruction is English, in addition to five years of continuous service with the United Nations Secretariat by 31 December 1989.

7. In order to meet the Organization's need to recruit staff for language posts who will serve for a reasonable period of time before reaching retirement age, staff members who do not serve on a fixed-term appointment and who will have reached age 56 by the deadline for the submission of applications, **10 December 2010**, will not be eligible to sit for the examination. There is no age limit for full-time staff members serving on fixed-term appointments.

8. All applications will be reviewed by the Board of Examiners. If a large number of applications is received, the Board reserves the right to admit to the examination only the most qualified applicants based on a review of the qualifications that are over and above the minimum criteria set out in paragraph 5. Applicants may be

[1] "Main language" should be understood to be the language into which the candidate is best able to interpret. Candidates' claims to English as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.

required to submit evidence of degrees, knowledge of languages and/or relevant experience prior to convocation. All applicants will be notified of the Board's decision in respect of their application. **The Board's decisions are final**.

9. The examination will consist of two parts:

(a) Simultaneous interpretation into English from recordings of three speeches delivered in French (approximately 8 to 10 minutes per recording);

(b) Simultaneous interpretation into English from recordings of three speeches delivered in Russian or Spanish (approximately 8 to 10 minutes per recording).

10. On the basis of the results of this examination, the Board of Examiners will invite selected candidates to a competency-based interview. The Board will interview each candidate to assess whether he or she possesses the competencies required for the position. The interview is an integral part of the examination. Therefore, candidates who are invited for an interview should **not** assume that they will be offered an appointment. Successful candidates who receive an offer of appointment are strongly encouraged to accept it, as declining may affect their prospects of receiving a subsequent offer.

11. On the basis of the overall results of the examination, the Board will recommend to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management the names of candidates who qualify for inclusion in the roster. All candidates admitted to the examination will be informed in writing of the Board's final recommendation in respect of their candidature. The Board's recommendations are not subject to appeal. The Board does not release individual scores or results.

12. Staff members selected to fill vacancies will be assigned as English-language interpreters for a trial period of two years. Staff members below the P-2 level or who are in the General Service category will receive a special post allowance to the P-2 level. Staff members at the P-2 and P-3 levels will be assigned at their respective levels.

13. Staff members with a special post allowance to the P-2 level and those already at the P-2 level who successfully complete the trial period and are recommended by the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management and the Office of Human Resources Management will be promoted to the P-3 level. Staff members already at the P-3 level who successfully complete the trial period will be confirmed in their interpretation functions at the P-3 level. After two years of satisfactory service on a fixed-term appointment, staff members will be considered for an appropriate, open-ended appointment according to the rules and regulations in effect at the time of recruitment. This means that staff members will have to demonstrate within that time that they possess the requisite qualifications and have rendered satisfactory service in order to receive such an appointment. Staff members who do not successfully complete the trial period will be reassigned to posts at their previous levels and the special post allowance, if any, will be discontinued.

14. Staff members selected to fill vacancies will be recruited as English-language interpreters according to the staff rules in force.

15. In accordance with the needs of the services/sections/units concerned, successful candidates may be called upon to work outside normal working hours, including weekends and holidays.

16. Staff members applying for the examination should complete the attached form and submit it, together with their Personal History Profile or P.11 form and the required certificates, **no later than 10 December 2010**, to:

2011 competitive examination for English-language interpreters

Examinations and Tests Section

Strategic Planning and Staffing Division

Office of Human Resources Management

Court Square Place, 11th Floor

24-01, 44th Road

Long Island City, New York 11101-4605

Fax No.: 212 963 3683

E-mail: OHRM_exam@un.org

Applications may be sent by e-mail, fax or mail. To the extent possible, applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their applications early and, preferably, by e-mail or fax. Applications that are incomplete or are received after the aforementioned deadline will **not** be considered.

17. In order to ensure the receipt of all applications submitted by staff members from offices away from Headquarters, such staff members are requested to send their applications directly to the Examinations and Tests Section through the Chief Administrative Officer or Director of the United Nations information centre of their respective duty stations by **10 December 2010**, the deadline for receipt of applications in the Examinations and Tests Section, Office of Human Resources Management.

Application (for staff members of the United Nations Secretariat only)

2011 competitive examination for English-language interpreters

Index No. | | | | | | |

Last name | | | | | | | | | | | | Category | | Level | |

First name | | | | | | | | | | | | Male | | Female | |

Date of entry on duty Month | | | Year | | | | |

Type of contract _____ Expiration date _____

Department/Office _____ Duty station _____

Room No. _____ Tel. extension _____ Fax No. _____ E-mail _____

Have you taken this examination before? Yes | | Year | | | | | No | |

Have you taken another United Nations competitive examination? Yes | | Year | | | | | No | |

If yes, which examination(s)? _____

What is your main language?[a] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Please complete an up-to-date P.11 form or, preferably, a Personal History Profile and attach it to this application. Describe your work experience, giving dates and length of time and the organization you worked for as an English-language interpreter, translator, editor and/or verbatim reporter.

Please attach also:

1. Academic transcript;
2. Documented work experience (if applicable).

Incomplete applications will not be considered.

[a] "Main language" should be understood to be the language into which the candidate is best able to interpret. Candidates' claims to English as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.

I certify that the information I have provided above is correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Date _____ Signature _____

(When applying by e-mail, type the date and your name above.)

I have read information circular ST/IC/2010/32 and I understand that, if I am successful in the 2011 competitive examination for English-language interpreters and am recommended for inclusion in the roster, my appointment as an English-language interpreter will be subject to my acceptance of the conditions of service indicated in paragraphs 12 to 15 of the circular.

Date _____ Signature _____

(When applying by e-mail, type the date and your name above.)